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**Strange But True**

By F. H. MacArthur

Chapter II

**OWN ON THE FARM**

It was late fall. Granddad had just carted the last of the root crop to the cellar.

"You'll not be able to keep them critters penned up all winter," he said to me one day. "First thing we know they'll bust out and then there'll be the devil to pay with muskrats running all over the place and doing harm."

"Better let them go," advised mother. "They will make their way to the brook and next year you'll be able to get into the trapping business again."

I promised to turn them loose as soon as I'd finished breakfast. It was too late. The animals beat me to it. They'd made their escape under the wire and that was that.

A couple of days later, granddad came up from the cellar in a furious rage and swearing like a pirate.

"What's eating you up?" grandma asked.

"It's them confounded muskrats, Ma. They're gulping the turnips faster than I can carry 'em to the barn. But you should see the holes they made in the cellar wall and in the horse stable, big enough to let a bobcat through."

Granddad set up his own trap line in our cellar, but before he cleaned up the muskrats there was trouble. Just as he had predicted there would be.

Thus ended my ranching venture, and the whole family breathed a sigh of relief when Granddad came from the lower



**THAT'S THE SPOT** — Sergeant D. Preece of Montague, P. E. I. picks a town in Germany where he would like to spend his leave, some time during the next two years. The three Prince Edward Island soldiers are sailing from Wolfe's Cove near Quebec City as replacements for the 27th Canadian Brigade now stationed in Europe. From left to right, are Pte. G. E. Irving, Murray Harbour; Sgt. Preece, Montague; and Pte. B. MacKay, Murray River (National Defence Photo)

**EARN'S FORGIVENESS**

**SELKIRK, Man., (CP)**—A young nephew of Mrs. Cyril Carter escaped a scolding for pulling up

plants in her garden. In the process he turned up a wedding ring lost by Mrs. W. Burch of Winnipeg 46 years ago, and identified by the inscription.

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regions holding a rat by the tail and proudly announcing, "The last one!"

It seems to me, that when I look back to those days on the farm, my ability to find amusement in the face of complete adversity was little short of amazing.

No sooner did one of my bright ideas fall through than a new one popped into my head to take its place.

"What's causing that awesome noise in the hollow?" everybody was asking everybody else.

Farmers travelling to and from the city would stop dead on Kellogg's bridge and listen to the goings on upstream.

"Must be fairies," grandma volunteered. "But then I've never known them to kick up such a racket before. Could it be?"

"Yes, it could," granddad said, looking sharply in my direction. "You just bet it could . . . be that boy's prank. I'd better look into the matter right now."

I tell you, my little invention down at the brook caused as much talk then as flying saucers do today. The more folks talked and guessed, and commented, the better I liked it.

I alone knew the cause of the noise issuing from the hollow and glorified in my secret knowledge.

Some hours later I spied granddad coming towards our home. In his right hand he held an axe. In his left was a great coil of telephone wire.

"Found the ghost, all right," I heard him tell the rest of the family from my hideout under the stairs. "Why that young skinflint is possessed of seven devils—where is the boy?"

It was the worst contraption you ever did see," granddad rattled on when nobody answered his question. "The wheel I've been looking for all spring is down there," he jerked his thumb in the direction of the creek. "fitted into a wastegate just like a real waterwheel. This coil of wire was fastened to the steel hub of the wheel, and the other end to a tall tree. The speed of the turning wheel against the wire caused it to shriek like a thousand spoons in torment."

"For land sakes," said grandma. "That boy will grow up to be an inventor. I just bet he will!"

"Not if I get my hands on him," granddad said. "I'll take his joints apart, so help me, I will!"

Grandma kept me out of sight all evening, even slipped up to my room with my supper and warned me to stay under the covers till Pa's temper cooled off.

"A word to the wise is sufficient," After a good night's rest granddad felt so much better that I escaped with nothing more than a sound scolding and a command to "get that thar wheel back in its proper place just as soon as you've swallowed breakfast."

(To be Continued)

**Canada's Trade Deficits Continue**

OTTAWA, (CP)—Canada's imports again outpaced exports during July, resulting in a \$7,200,000 trade deficit—the sixth monthly deficit for 1953.

This brought the total seven-month adverse balance for 1953 to \$204,000,000, a reversal from the \$203,400,000 surplus in the similar 1952 period, the Bureau of Statistics reported Wednesday.

Imports during July rose to \$405,400,000 from \$393,200,000 last year, bringing the seven-month total to a record \$2,622,000,000, a \$328,500,000 gain from \$2,293,500,000 in 1952. Exports also edged ahead increasing to \$398,300,000 in July from \$375,100,000. However, the seven-month total dropped to \$2,418,000,000 from \$2,467,100,000.

A big surge in imports widened Canada's seven-month adverse trade gap with the U.S. to \$536,700,000 from \$381,600,000 last year. "This was the biggest deficit since the \$572,900,000 gap in 1947.

**INS AND OUTS**

PRESTON, Eng., (CP)—Prison authorities of this Lancashire city warned wardens that they may be locked out of jail on their nights out unless they're in by the 10 p.m. deadline.

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